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Alexander D. Crary

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M E M O R A N D U M

April 8, 1985

TO: Senator
FROM: ADC
RE: Nomination of Edward Curran to head NEH

W-1 ✓
The White House has announced its intention to nominate Ed Curran as Chairman of NEH. We have no official paper on this yet but it looks definite.

The main problem with Curran is his mediocrity. He comes with good political connections but without the stature that the job needs. Of all past chairmen he would rank as the least impressive. He does not have a Ph.D. and has had no experience in anything connected with higher education and it is at the graduate level that so much of the NEH programs are focused.

He taught at the prep school level from 1955 to 1968 and then became headmaster of the National Cathedral School in Washington where he stayed until 1980. He then joined the Reagan-Bush campaign which rewarded him with positions on the Education Transition Team and then in the Office of Presidential Personnel. He was named Director of N.I.E. in 1981 and lasted for 8 months before being fired by Ted Bell. Bell got rid of him for a letter that Curran sent to Reagan which proposed the shutdown of N.I.E. The letter was not sent through Bell.

In 1982 he was confirmed by the Foreign Relations Committee to be Deputy Director of the Peace Corps. I have reviewed the testimony from his Senate confirmation hearings and find a complete lack of insight, intelligence and even ambition. He says just enough to get him through the hearing. The only award he lists on his resume is having the courtyard at National Cathedral School named after him. His wife is a duPont and they are said to be close to the Bushes.

My recommendation is that you be very cautious in referring to Curran and say that you will want to question him closely in a confirmation hearing. Based on academic accomplishment and work experience, he is not qualified for the job - in my opinion.

Two nominees will soon be polled by the Committee and I suggest you approve both. Papers are attached.

Martha Graham to the NEA Council

OK ✓

George Rosborough to the IMS Board
(from St. Louis, acquaintance of
Sen. Eagleton)

OK ✓